

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 DHA-02 SSO-00
NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
/056 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1846
INFO AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 5784

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, NU
SUBJECT: FATHER BERTRAND ALIVE AND WELL IN HONDURAS

REF: (A) MANAGUA 5778; (B) STATE 305441; (C) TEGUCIGALPA 5857

1. AT APPROXIMATELY 11:15 A.M. MANAGUA TIME (12:15 IN WASHINGTON) EMBOFF SPOKE ON TELEPHONE WITH THE AMERICAN CAPUCHIN PRIESTS W. LULOFF IN EL JICANO AND J. SMEDANA IN QUILALI ABOUT CASE OF FATHER GARY BERTRAND, KNOWN AS PADRE EVARISTO. ALTHOUGH CONNECTION WAS BAD THE MESSAGE WAS CLEAR. FATHER BERTRAND, THEY BOTH SAID, IS IN DANLI, HONDURAS, AND IS WELL. THEY ALSO SAID THAT CAPUCHIN PRIESTS IN NICARAGUA ADVISED CAPUCHIN HEADQUARTERS IN U.S. OF BERTRAND'S CURRENT SITUATION.

2. PRIOR TO ABOVE PHONE CALLS, GENERAL SAMUEL GENIE OF GN REPEATED TO EMBOFF THIS MORNING WHAT HE HAD STATED BEFORE ON BERTRAND, TO WIT, BERTRAND HAD COME INTO NICARAGUA ON NOV 11 THROUGH THE ERROR OF AN IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL AT LAS MANOS, THAT BERTRAND HAD SAID HE WAS COMING IN FOR TOURISM AND THAT A THIRTY-DAY PERMISSION WAS STAMPED IN HIS PASSPORT. WHEN THAT THIRTY DAYS HAD EXPIRED AND HE DID
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NOT LEAVE, GUARDIA OFFICERS CHECKED HIS DOCUMENTS, TOLD HIM HE WAS IN THE COUNTRY ILLEGALLY AND ESCORTED HIM TO THE HONDURAN BORDER AT LAS MANOS.

3. AMBASSADOR HAS LEARNED FROM PRESIDENT SOMOZA THAT PRESIDENT IN RESPONSE TO REQUEST SEVERAL MONTHS AGO FROM

PAPAL NUNCIO AND BISHOP CARRANZA OF ESTEL, SAID HE WOULD
RECONSIDER THE RETURN OF BERTRAND IN DECEMBER IF THERE WERE
NO FURTHER PROBLEMS IN THE CASE IN THE INTERIM. PRESIDENT
MADE IT CLEAR, HE SAID, THAT SPECIFIC PERMISSION WOULD
HAVE TO BE GRANTED. BERTRAND, NEVERTHELESS, WITHOUT SUCH
PERMISSION AND APPARENTLY WITHOUT EITHER
PERMISSION FROM OR NOTIFICATION TO BISHOP OR NUNCIO,
TOOK IT ON HIS OWN TO ENTER NICARAGUA ON NOV. 11.
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